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BAUCUS PRESSES IRS NOMINEE FOR QUICK ACTION ON STIMULUS CHECKS

*Finance Chairman to Shulman: improve agency performance, IRS experience for
Americans*

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today questioned IRS Commissioner nominee Douglas Shulman about the challenges he would face as incoming Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), including the need to quickly send tax rebate checks to millions of Americans in the next few weeks. Baucus also pressed Shulman to address the billions of dollars in legally owed taxes that go uncollected every year, to bring IRS information technologies up to speed with a globalized financial sector, and to find ways to keep IRS employees and deal with an aging workforce. The Finance Committee has jurisdiction over U.S. tax policy and the Internal Revenue Service.

“We need to be certain of the ability of the IRS to respond quickly in getting much-needed tax rebates into the hands of millions of Americans,” said Baucus. **“Economic stimulus is the number one priority right now, but the IRS has many other challenges before it, and I’m expecting follow-through and results and I will hold you to this.”**

Shulman responded that issuing rebate checks during the current tax filing season would be challenging, but committed to work with Congress to implement economic stimulus measures as quickly as possible. He also said that updating IRS information technology, including its website, would be a priority for him as Commissioner. He agreed with Baucus that modernizing the agency’s computer systems is an important step in improving customer service and taxpayer literacy and in enforcing taxpayer compliance – all key elements of closing the annual “gap” of uncollected taxes.

“I agree with you one hundred percent that the tax gap is a problem,” said Shulman. **“It undermines the system and I am committed to working on it.”**

Baucus reiterated his belief that the IRS can achieve 90 percent voluntary compliance with the tax law among America’s taxpayers and assured Shulman that he will continue to work with the IRS to help the agency meet that goal and other directives set forth by the Committee.

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